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AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

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USMISSION USUN

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 13353

FOR POLADS

E.O. 11652: GDS

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SUBJECT: SOVIET REACTION TO NON-ALIGNED SUMMIT

SUMMARY. SOVIET COVERAGE OF THE COLOMBO NON-ALIGNED SUMMIT WAS EXTENSIVE, AND THE FINAL DOCUMENTS, AS REPORTED IN THE SOVIET PRESS, CONTAIN LITTLE THAT SHOULD DISTURB MOSCOW. YET THE FOLLOW-UP HAS BEEN MUTED, WITH REPEATED REFERENCES TO ERRONEOUS IDEAS FOSTERED BY THE "IMPERIALISTS" AND THE MAOISTS". THE TONE SUGGESTES THAT THE SOVIETS WERE DISAPPOINTED IN THE CONFERENCE, AND THAT THEY ARE BOTHERED BY THE U.S. AND CHINESE SUCCESSES IN THEIR RENEWED EFFORTS TO WOO THE NON-ALIGNED. OUR DIPLOMATIC COLLEAGUES AGREE
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THAT THE SOVIETS ARE DISAPPOINTED, AND SOME SEE THE COLOMBO

COVERAGE AS CONSISTENT WITH A TOUGHER, MORE DEFENSIVE SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY LINE IN GENERAL. A SOVIET ACADEMIC DISMISSED THE IMPORTANCE BOTH OF THE CONFERENCE AND OF THE PRESS TREATMENT. END SUMMARY.

1. THE CRESCENDO BUILDING UP TO THE COLOMBO CONFERENCE BEGAN MANY MONTHS AGO IN SOVIET MEDIA AND REACHED A FORTISSIMO AT THE TIME THE SUMMIT OPENED LAST WEEK. THE DOMINANT THEME THROUGHOUT THIS PRELUDE WAS THAT THE "SOCIALIST" (I.E., COMMUNIST) COUNTRIES, ESPECIALLY THE USSR, WERE THE TRUE FRIENDS OF THE NON-ALIGNED, THAT THE TWO GROUPS SAW THINGS SIMILARLY AND THAT THEY SUPPORTED EACH OTHER. SEVERAL ITEMS ALSO CARRIED WARNINGS AGAINST THOSE, ESPECIALLY THE MAOISTS, WHO SOUGHT TO SPLIT THE NON-ALIGNED FROM THEIR "SOCIALIST" FRIENDS.

2. DURING THE WEEK OF THE CONFERENCE, THREE ASPECTS OF SOVIET PRESS TREATMENT WERE NOTABLE: FIRST, THE VOLUME OF ATTENTION TO BREZHNEV'S MESSAGE OF GREETINGS, AND TO REPLAYS OF PRO-SOVIET COMMENTS AT THE CONFERENCE; SECOND, THE INTENSITY OF CONCERN OVER THE APPARENT SUCCESS OF "SOME PEOPLE" WHO LUMPED THE SUPERPOWERS TOGETHER; AND THIRD, THE LOW LEVEL OF MAJOR COMMENT AT THE CONFERENCE'S CONCLUSION.

3. THE BREZHNEV MESSAGE (PRAVDA AND IZVESTIYA AUG 16) SEEMS TO US TO BE ROUTINE FOR THE OCCASION AS IT CATALOGUES THE POSITIVE CHANGES IN THE WORLD IN RECENT YEARS--DETENTE, HELSINKI, SUCCESSFUL "LIBERATION" STRUGGLES IN INDOCHINA AND ANGOLA, THE ANTI-COLONIAL STRUGGLE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA--AND AFFIRMS THE USSR'S CONSISTENT SUPPORT FOR THE NON-ALIGNED. SOME OF OUR DIPLOMATIC COLLEAGUES, NOTABLY THE FRENCH, HAVE MADE MUCH OF THE PORTION OF THE MESSAGE WARNING THAT "THE FORCES OF REACTION AND MILITARISM" STILL SEEK "TO RETURN THE WORLD TO THE TIME OF THE 'COLD WAR' AND THE BRINK OF NUCLEAR CATASTROPHE". WE AND MOST OTHERS, HOWEVER, SEE THIS AS FAIRLY CONSISTENT WITH THE TOUGH SIDE OF RECENT SOVIET RHETORIC, AS EXPRESSED IN BREZHNEV'S BERLIN SPEECH ON JUNE 29 AND HIS WELCOMING REMARKS TO MRS. GANDHI ON JUNE 8. SEVERAL OBSERVERS HAVE NOTED THAT THIS MESSAGE WAS SENT IN BREZHNEV'S NAME ONLY, WHEREAS THREE YEARS AGO FOR THE CONFIDENTIAL

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ALGIERS SUMMIT IT WAS SENT ONLY BY KOSYGIN AND PODGORNYY (PRAVDA, SEPT 5, 1973).

4. WHATEVER THE REASON FOR THIS CURIOSITY, THE MESSAGE WAS HAILED IN SEVERAL SOVIET PRESS ARTICLES FROM COLOMBO, TO THE POINT WHERE THE PRAISE SEEMED TO BE TAKING THE PLACE OF COVERAGE OF DEVELOPMENTS AT THE MEETING. THE SAME WAS TRUE OF REPLAYS OF PRO-SOVIET COMMENTS, WHICH INVITED THE QUESTION

OF WHAT ALL THE OTHERS WERE SAYING.

5. PART OF WHAT THEY WERE SAYING EVIDENTLY DISPLEASED MOSCOW. IN THE ONLY SIGNED COMMENTARY DURING THE WEEK, THE CHIEF OF PRAVDA'S AFRO-ASIAN DEPARTMENT, PAVEL DEMCHENKO, COMPLAINED STRONGLY (ON AUG 19) ABOUT THE "FALSE NOTES" IN SOME SPEECHES BLAMING "THE SUPERPOWERS" (PLURAL) FOR LDC ECONOMIC PROBLEMS. BESIDES THIS "PROVOCATIVE" NONSENSE, "SOME PEOPLE" AT THE CONFERENCE, SAYS DEMCHENKO, PUT FORTH THE THESIS ABOUT THE "HEGEMONY OF THE SUPERPOWERS, AND EQUATED THE POLICIES OF THE U.S. AND THE USSR. ON THE INDIAN OCEAN, THEY CHARGED THAT "THE GREAT POWERS ARE STRENGTHENING THEIR POSITIONS AND EXPANDING THEIR INFLUENCE." THE SORT OF THING IGNORES THE BASIC FACT THAT "SOCIALISM" AND IMPERIALISM HAVE OPPOSITE BASES AND GOALS, SAYS DEMCHENKO.

6. ALL MEDIA REPORTED THE CONCLUSION OF THE CONFERENCE, AND PRAVDA (AUG 21) GAVE WHAT LOOKS LIKE A FAIRLY STRAIGHT RUNDOWN ON THE POLITICAL DECLARATION. THE ECONOMIC DECLARATION IS TREATED MORE BRIEFLY, BUT IN GENERALLY POSITIVE TERMS. COMMENTARY SINCE THE CONCLUSION OF THE CONFERENCE, HOWEVER, HAS BEEN SPARSE. PRAVDA'S INTERNATIONAL WEEK (AUG 22) BY YULIY YAKHONTOV, CARRIED SEVERAL PARAGRAPHS REAFFIRMING MOSCOW'S SUPPORT FOR THE NON-ALIGNED GOALS OF ANTI-IMPERIALISM, ANTI-COLONIALISM AND ANTI-APARTHEID. BUT THE ARTICLE SAYS THAT THE FURTHER ADVANCES WERE HINDERED BY DIFFERENCES WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT, AND IT GOES ON TO CHARGE THAT "SOME" SOUGHT TO HAVE THE CONFERENCE CONSIDER "SUPERPOWER HEGEMONY". LEST ANYONE MISS THE POINT, YAKHONTOV NAMES THE "MAOIST LEADERSHIP" AS THE WOULD-BE SPLITTERS.

7. IZVESTIYA AUG 23 CARRIES A FRONT-PAGE COMMENTARY MAKING MOST OF THE SAME POINTS AND ADDING THE OPTIMISTIC
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CONCLUSION THAT THE "FALSE VOICES" WHICH ECHOED "IMPERIALIST" AND PEKING PROPAGANDA "DID NOT RECEIVE SUPPORT" AT THE CONFERENCE.

8. ORIENTAL STUDIES INSTITUTE DEPUTY DIRECTOR GANKOVSKIY, IN A CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF ON AUGUST 24, DISMISSED THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE COLOMBO MEETING AND OF SOVIET PRESS COMMENTARY. HE SAID THAT THE CONFERENCE PRODUCED "NOTHING UNEXPECTED", AND SAID THAT THE NEGATIVE PRESS COMMENTS WERE SIMPLY A LOW-LEVEL REACTION TO SOME OF THE STATEMENTS IN COLOMBO. PRESSED ON SOVIET REACTION TO THE TREATMENT OF THE INDIAN OCEAN ISSUE, GANKOVSKIY FIRST JOKED THAT MOSCOW HAD NO OBJECTION TO REMARKS ABOUT "IMPERIALIST BASES" ON DIEGO GARCIA. THEN HE ADDED "CONFIDENTIALLY" THAT HE DID NOT EXPECT THAT ANYTHING "SHE" (I.E., MRS. BANDARANAIKE) AND

OTHERS SAID AT THE CONFERENCE WOULD HAVE ANY EFFECT ON POLICY TOWARD THE AREA, EITHER IN WASHINGTON OR IN MOSCOW.

9. COMMENT. ALTHOUGH THE CONFERENCE MAY HAVE GONE ABOUT AS THE SOVIETS EXPECTED, AND THEY CANNOT OBJECT TO THE BULK OF THE RESOLUTIONS, THEY WERE CLEARLY DISAPPOINTED. IN PARTICULAR, THE TREATMENT OF THE INDIAN OCEAN AND OF LDC ECONOMIC PROBLEMS, INCLUDING THE PLURAL REFERENCES TO THE ACTIVITIES OF THE "SUPERPOWERS", MAY HAVE SIGNALLED TO THE SOVIETS THAT THEY CAN NO LONGER AVOID BEING THE TARGETS OF NON-ALIGNED SCRUTINY. THUS, THE CONFERENCE MAY HAVE SHOWN THE SOVIETS THAT RECENT U.S. AND PRC EFFORTS TO REESTABLISH THEIR CREDENTIALS IN THE THIRD WORLD ARE SUCCEEDING -- A PROSPECT WHICH BOTHERS THEM MORE THAN THEY LET ON.
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